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EDUCATION AND INFORMATION FOR DISARMAMENT

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/64, entitled "Education and information for disarmament", in which the Assembly expressed its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports submitted pursuant to resolutions 44/123 and 46/27; invited Member States and international governmental and non-governmental organizations and educational institutions for peace and disarmament to redouble their efforts to respond to the appeal made in paragraph 106 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly and to submit to the Secretary-General a report on their activities in that regard; and requested the Secretary-General to submit those reports to the Assembly at its fiftieth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 15 March 1995, requested Member States to provide the relevant information by 30 April 1995. The information received from Governments is reproduced in section II below. Any additional information received from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

3. In addition, letters dated 15 March 1995 requesting information on disarmament education were sent to international governmental organizations concerned with the subject. The only reply received to date is contained in section III below.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

CUBA

[Original: Spanish]

[10 May 1995]

1. Activities related to education and information for disarmament are vital for achieving the increasingly high goals pursued in the area of disarmament and international security.

2. In this respect, Cuba has been making a serious and intensive effort which has so far yielded very encouraging results in fostering a better understanding of disarmament issues among officials, military experts, professionals and the population at large. Some examples of the most important activities are given below.

(a) Establishment of a Centre for Disarmament and International Security Studies within the Ministry of the Armed Forces. The Centre, which at present includes over 20 military experts in disarmament and international security, prepares medium- and long-term studies on these issues and participates in workshops, seminars and other special national or international events. Its specialists serve as research advisers for theses, diploma studies, and research papers or as members of thesis or dissertation committees. The Centre offers postgraduate courses for the training of other specialists in disarmament and

international security and establishes working relationships with other related institutions and international bodies. Cuba believes that all these efforts to promote discussion and study of disarmament and international security issues within the armed forces of the country contribute significantly to making the military better informed and providing specialized training in this important sector of society, which is involved in a very direct way in making and implementing Cuba's disarmament policy.

(b) Teaching of subjects relating to international treaties on disarmament, and in particular with respect to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in different higher education courses. For example, in the University of Havana alone the following postgraduate courses were offered in 1994:

(i) Course in biological safety and the Convention on biological weapons for microbiology laboratory technicians (20 hours/December 1994);

(ii) Course in biological safety and the Convention on biological weapons for graduates in microbiology, biochemistry, biology, medicine and related field (40 hours/December 1994-January 1995). During the 1993/94 academic year, in the Faculty of Biology of the University of Havana, various master's theses, undergraduate papers and other research work were written dealing from various perspectives with questions related to the Convention on biological weapons.

(c) The Veterinary Centre for Disaster Preparedness is engaged in an important experiment in the area of information and education for disarmament. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate training to veterinarians and related professionals under a programme which includes the study of the basic provisions contained in the Convention on biological weapons and the Convention on chemical weapons. Since its establishment, the Centre has provided undergraduate training to 1,691 students and postgraduate training to 871 professionals. Among the study materials used by the Centre are textbooks that include specific chapters on the above-mentioned conventions.

(d) Lectures on disarmament and international security by specialists from the National Defence College.

(e) Preparation and publication of papers in the national press aimed at making the general public better informed about the more important disarmament issues.

(f) In 1995 (14-16 March), Cuba hosted the Regional Seminar on the National Implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, in which over 20 countries and international institutions participated. Broad national coverage of the issues was provided in the press and through round-table discussions, interviews, etc. In addition, the various national bodies involved with such questions were well represented at the seminar.

ESTONIA

[Original: English]

[22 May 1995]

1. The territory of Estonia was occupied for a long time by the forces of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, since 1992, by the forces of the Russian Federation. Based upon international law, Estonia sought by peaceful means the withdrawal of those forces. The withdrawal of the Russian forces was accomplished by 31 August 1994. As a result, over 700 military installations have been closed. All military airports have been abandoned and all offensive weapons have been returned to the Russian Federation. Estonia has been effectively disarmed.

2. The attributes of an independent country are its defence forces and, in keeping with this tradition, Estonia has built up a minimal defence structure, currently consisting of 5,300 men.

3. During the years of foreign occupation, a strong sentiment against military service was born, which developed into a popular movement during the years from 1988 to 1991. Therefore, we feel that there are no reasons to start a new national campaign for disarmament.

4. Estonia is deeply interested in disarmament affairs and hopes that its neighbours will proceed with their declared disarmament programmes as rapidly as possible.

JAPAN

[Original: English]

[28 April 1995]

1. The Government of Japan is committed to incorporating into the elementary and junior high school social studies curriculum and the high school civics curriculum instruction on the need for world peace and the principles of peace embodied in the Japanese Constitution.

2. Specifically, sixth grade social studies classes are taught about the role of the United Nations for the realization of peace throughout the international community. Students are also taught about the importance of world peace and Japan's important role in the world. Such questions as what actions the United Nations can take in addressing issues facing mankind, for example, restricting nuclear weapons, are discussed.

3. In the junior high school civics curriculum, students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the pacificism embodied in Japan's Constitution and to consider issues relating to the security and defence of Japan. Attention is given to the threat of nuclear weapons, and students are encouraged to

develop a strong sense of the need to cooperate for the prevention of war and the establishment of world peace.

4. The senior high school civics curriculum focuses on an understanding of such issues as those relating to nuclear weapons and disarmament in the promotion of world peace, and seeks to instil an appreciation for the significance of the solidarity of humankind throughout the international community; students are encouraged to consider Japan's role and the way of life as a Japanese citizen in the international context.

5. In addition, in political and economics civics classes, students are taught about Japan's position and role in contributing to world peace and the welfare of humankind, as well as about issues of concern to the international community, such as those relating to disarmament, population and ethnicity.

6. There are no non-governmental organizations dealing exclusively with education and public information on disarmament issues.

III. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]

[16 May 1995]

1. Although the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is not directly concerned with disarmament education and information, its new culture of peace programme concerns itself with the general transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace, which must include disarmament.

2. The 1st Consultative Meeting of the Culture of Peace Programme, which was held at UNESCO headquarters from 27 to 29 September 1994, recommended that the programme include in its tasks the promotion of a peace economy. The report of the meeting stated:

> "The military-industrial complex is the latest in a long series of institutions of war that have provided economic power and profit. Why not an 'industry of peace', in which peace is a profitable enterprise and an 'attractive' alternative? In order to convert a military-based economy to a civilian one, all of the components of the military-industrial complex must be addressed and alternatives found for them.
>
> "As the transition to a culture of peace proceeds, resources formerly drained by the culture of war will be allocated to human development and social programmes, promoting education, tolerance, respect for cultural identities and an end to the arms trade."

3. The Culture of Peace Programme seeks to link its efforts with other international organizations dedicated to disarmament through the programme's information and networking system. As part of its information and networking services, the programme takes part in forums such as the meeting of the Special Non-Governmental Organization Committee for Disarmament, which took place at UNESCO on 24 February 1995. The forum recognized the programme as an integral part of the disarmament movement, concluding that the culture of peace initiative was an important new approach, which had the potential to contribute to conflict prevention as well as post-conflict peace-building.

4. UNESCO and the Organization of American States organized the Inter-American Symposium on Security for Peace on 3 and 4 April 1995, which was also of relevance in the context of cooperation with other international organizations.